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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-seventh session
9 June-3 July 1997
Agenda item 8

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 4 (a))

Section 17. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

1. At its 19th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

2. Several delegations reaffirmed their support for the multifaceted role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and its commitment to the development of the region and expressed full support for the proposed programme budget. They noted that the budget document was detailed and concise and clearly highlighted the priorities in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the activities to be undertaken.

3. Some delegations expressed concern that the proposed resources were not commensurate with the development needs of the countries of the region. They emphasized that reform should not reduce the Commission's capacity to deliver services but rather be conducive to increased efficiency. Several delegations welcomed the increase in resource growth for substantive activities under the section on the programme of work.

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4. One delegation noted with concern the increase in the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process.

5. A number of delegations expressed support for the promotion of international cooperation in the region and the reinforcement of inter-agency collaboration through the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific and its subcommittees. Other delegations noted with appreciation the Commission's great contribution to the international community and to the needs of its member countries, in particular its assistance to countries with economies in transition in Central Asia through technical assistance and advisory services in the areas of macroeconomic reform, transport, trade and investment. Satisfaction was also expressed for the inclusion of activities related to the participation of the private sector in development, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of science and technology and human resources development. Some delegations stressed the need for the Commission to continue its lead role in infrastructure development to facilitate intraregional trade, and the development of transport and communications linkages.

6. A number of delegations emphasized the need to strengthen the Commission's role in operational activities, particularly technical assistance and advisory services, and to pay special attention to the needs of least developed and landlocked countries, island developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Conclusions and recommendations

[7. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 17, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.]

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Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 4 (a))

Section 18. Economic development in Europe

1. At its 20th meeting, on 24 June 1997, the Committee considered section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed their support for the proposed programme of work which clearly reflected the strategic guidelines of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the extensive reforms adopted by the member States of the Economic Commission for Europe. Those delegations welcomed the refocusing of the programme of work on priority areas for the region such as environment, statistics, development of international trade and assistance to economies in transition. Many delegations considered that positive results were anticipated since the streamlining and readjustments of the programme of work, that is, discontinuation of one subprogramme and of several subsidiary bodies, would bring about greater effectiveness and synergy within the Commission. The diversity of approaches to economic cooperation in Europe, as well as the Commission's role as a facilitator in fostering it, was also welcomed.

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3. Some delegations underscored the intensive relationship of the Economic Commission for Europe with existing regional and subregional and other structures, such as the European Union, the Western European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Central European Initiative, the Royaument Initiative for good-neighbourly relations and stability, the South-East Cooperative Initiative and others, with a view to strengthening cooperation on the continent.

4. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process.

Conclusions and recommendations

[5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.]

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Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 4 (a))

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its 22nd meeting, on 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

2. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme and acknowledged the positive impact of the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in many areas of development and the prestige that it enjoys in the region as a centre of excellence. Some delegations welcomed the quality and quantity of the publications programme and stressed the importance of assuring wide distribution for all publications.

3. Some delegations considered that the level of both regular budget and extrabudgetary resources was not adequate to cover the extensive programme of work contained in the section. They were also concerned about the number of posts proposed for abolition and the negative impact this might have on the capacity of ECLAC to implement its programme of work. Others stressed the need to ensure that sufficient regular budgetary and extrabudgetary resources are allocated to the subregional headquarters of ECLAC, in particular the Caribbean.

One delegation expressed the view that, given the economic and social problems facing the Latin American and Caribbean regions, ECLAC should now place greater emphasis than hitherto on operational activities that address the priority concerns of the region. Some delegations emphasized the importance of maintaining appropriate coverage of social equity issues. Others were concerned about the low level of resources available for environmental issues.

4. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process. Some delegations stressed that further streamlining might hinder, in the long run, the full implementation of the Commission's mandated activities.

5. Some delegations supported the streamlining and restructuring reflected in the work programme. Several delegations supported the thrust of the proposed management pilot scheme and noted its potential application to other areas of the Secretariat. Other delegations welcomed the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme. Other delegations welcomed the recent effort to improve the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme and expressed the hope that a constant dialogue would be maintained on such a setting of priorities as well as on the implementation of the decisions adopted by ECLAC on 6 June 1997 regarding the management pilot scheme.

6. Some delegations questioned the legislative mandate justifying the involvement of ECLAC in activities stemming from the Summit of the Americas held in Miami.

Conclusions and recommendations

[7. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, with the following modification:

In paragraph 19.58 (c), the word "CARICOM" should be added at the end of the paragraph.]

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Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 4 (a))

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its 22nd meeting, on 25 June 1997, the Committee considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Discussion

2. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme and acknowledged the positive impact of the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in many areas of development and the prestige that it enjoys in the region as a centre of excellence. Some delegations welcomed the quality and quantity of the publications programme and stressed the importance of assuring wide distribution for all publications.

3. Some delegations considered that the level of both regular budget and extrabudgetary resources was not adequate to cover the extensive programme of work contained in the section. They were also concerned about the number of posts proposed for abolition and the negative impact this might have on the capacity of ECLAC to implement its programme of work. Others stressed the need to ensure that sufficient regular budgetary and extrabudgetary resources were allocated to the subregional headquarters of ECLAC, in particular the Caribbean.

One delegation expressed the view that, given the economic and social problems facing the Latin American and Caribbean regions, ECLAC should now place greater emphasis than hitherto on operational activities that addressed the priority concerns of the region. Some delegations emphasized the importance of maintaining appropriate coverage of social equity issues. Others were concerned about the low level of resources available for environmental issues.

4. One delegation noted with concern the increase of the overall resources requested under the section and considered that resources should decrease as a result of the streamlined structure derived from the reform process. Some delegations stressed that further streamlining might hinder, in the long run, the full implementation of the Commission's mandated activities.

5. Some delegations supported the streamlining and restructuring reflected in the work programme. One delegation requested information on the legislative mandate for the inclusion of the last phrase in paragraph 19.4 of the section. Several delegations supported the thrust of the proposed management pilot scheme and noted its potential application to other areas of the Secretariat. Other delegations welcomed the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme. Other delegations welcomed the recent effort to improve the dialogue between ECLAC and member countries in the setting of priorities within the work programme and expressed the hope that a constant dialogue would be maintained on such a setting of priorities as well as on the implementation of the decisions adopted by ECLAC on 6 June 1997 regarding the management pilot scheme.

6. Some delegations questioned the legislative mandate justifying the involvement of ECLAC in activities stemming from the Summit of the Americas held at Miami. One delegation expressed regret that some delegations that had participated in the Summit of the Americas had questioned the legislative mandate relating to that Summit.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, subject to further consideration as stated in paragraph 35 of the introduction, with the following modification: in paragraph 19.58 (c), the word "CARICOM" should be added at the end of the paragraph.